

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord our God shall call.—JERL.

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MINUTES OF A GENERAL COUNCIL

HELD IN FARM STREET CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM, COMMENCING JAN. 1, 1862.

(Continued from page 88.)

Young men may not think it of the same degree of importance as old men, and that is the reason why I speak of it to you, that you may understand it and apply it, that through our exertions humanity may begin its upward journey to the Fountain of life. "But," says one, "you have never used tobacco." Yes, I have. But because I have used it and have been able to overcome it, I do not adopt the conclusion that you can all get rid of it with the same ease. But because a work is hard to be done is no reason why it should not be attempted. None of us expect to go into heaven smoking a cigar or a pipe. Such an idea is contrary to the purity we expect to enjoy when we mingle in the society of those who are pure and holy and sanctified. The purity that is there is the purity of truth; the glory that is there is the glory of consistent actions that conduce to man's happiness and exaltation. Seeing that the condition which we anticipate and desire is so produced, why should we not make it our study, according to the ability we have, to overcome within ourselves the evils, improprieties, and wrongs which militate against us? We are developing within ourselves the great principle of salvation, and that is the principle of self-government. We

have no need to learn particularly how to govern the people. If we can learn how to govern ourselves, the power to govern other people will be just as natural a result as it is for the peach tree to bear peaches and no other kind of fruit.

I wish the brethren to take a comprehensive view of the "Word of Wisdom," and understand that keeping it is to pursue a course that will ennoble you. To do the most good and the least evil is the consistent principle for you and I to act upon till we know so much that we can adopt a course of action which will have within it all good and no evil. But we have not got to that yet; we are only striving to reach it. I talk just as I feel and understand, and would like my brethren to understand. Here in your ministration your business is to save people, and you will have every variety of habits to meet; and the influence that extends from them to labour with, under these circumstances, you require, to know how to deal with them for the benefit of the people to whom you minister. Wanting this knowledge, you are poor—poor as the man who wants a breakfast, and has not the money to buy one; for you do not know how to get along. And this knowledge you can best gain

experience. The Lord has said that the glory which will result from a man's having so laboured as to save one soul in the kingdom of God is incalculable. Well, now, supposing we were going out to proclaim the Gospel, and we were told that, if we could only save one soul, it would secure unto us a heaven of happiness, glory, and exaltation, how many of us would not be willing—aye, anxious to go out to save a soul—perhaps smoking tobacco and drinking spirits! But if we continued the use of these things, and they militated against our salvation, what glory would it be to us, if we could save a soul, and yet be lost ourselves? If there is to be such glory gained by saving one soul, I would try and save my own self first; and if I can get that soul saved, all the glory that is to be obtained through that salvation will be possessed and enjoyed by me. Now, you can all see as well as I that if we could save all the world, and yet go to hell ourselves, their happiness would not alleviate our misery in the smallest degree. But if we can save ourselves, the glory that is to be gained by that salvation will be ours to enjoy, and not another's; and every ecstasy that can be awakened in the soul will receive its brightest colours and most gorgeous beauties from the reflection that it is ours. The greatness, immutability, and perfection of the glory gained is ours—the gift of our Royal Father. And when we talk about glory, let us remember that if we save our own soul in the kingdom of God, our glory will increase, always expanding, widening, and deepening in proportion to the knowledge we possess.

I do wish you to remember these things, and resolve from this time to pay more attention to self-culture—to the improvement of yourselves. I wish you to behave so well that your very appearance will be consistent with the divine truths you teach. A man should be cleanly in his habits and neat in his person, not only for the pleasure and comfort he would personally enjoy, but also for the influence it would have in his labours. When you open your mouths to speak, your words should be as clean and proper as your person. Words that are fitly spoken are like a garment that fits well: it is neat and proper. I wish you to study your

manners, address, and appearance. I wish to tell you how a poor man may get along, and yet not be acquainted with the rules of etiquette. If any man behaves rudely to you, it is always offensive; hence you can easily understand that if you behave rudely to others, it must be offensive to them. Study, therefore, to have your manner kind and gentle. If you do not know exactly how the dancing master would have you step, just walk uprightly, and you will never need to blush for yourselves, so far as that is concerned. If you are not masters of elocution in speaking, be kind and respectful in your language and manner, and treat the opinions of others with deference and respect. If you tell the people that you are messengers of mercy and peace to man, that you come to represent all that is high and holy and noble, declaring that you are the friends of mankind, will anybody be mad at you on that account? Continue in that way, and you will gain favour everywhere with Saints and with those who are not Saints. You will be respected by sinners, because you respect them; and we ought all to respect sinners, for Jesus respected them and was their friend, and he was better than we are. We are sinners ourselves, and expect mercy extended to us from God our Father; and as his children we should extend sympathy and respect to those of his children who are not so favoured as we are. There is another matter I would wish to name to the brethren, and that is, the manner of dealing with those unfortunate people who do wrong after coming into the Church. I do not wish to say anything by way of laying down an arbitrary rule; but always seek to possess a spirit of charity when you are required to deal with transgressors, and remember, when you are called to deal with those who do wrong, that your business is to try and save them. You should not deal with them or cut them off from the Church with any other design but that they may be saved. If you do this, when an individual has been cut off from the Church for wrong, if that wrong is not of a character that cannot be forgiven, (and you need not be alarmed about many such cases coming under your notice,) you will extend charity and kindness to

all those who have done wrong and desire to do right. I will tell you how you may come very near forming a correct conclusion as to whether they desire to do right. When an individual comes to you and says, "I want to try again—to make another effort to travel the path of virtue and obedience," it should be to you an evidence of his repentance—a testimony that he has a little love for the truth—a disposition to live right. Are you going to say that soul shall not be saved? You travel through the world to save sinners, yet here is one whom you do not know whether you will try to save or not. At the same time an individual, who had perhaps been all his lifetime wandering in the depths of iniquity and wallowing in filth, comes to you and says, "I have been drunk, but I believe what you say; I am a very wicked man: I want to come into the Church," and upon this confession you go and baptize him who was never in the Church before. Then the first thing we hear is, "We have baptized so many!" Well, how many have you baptized who were cut off for having done wrong, and who now desire to do right? What makes the great difference between these two classes of sinners? When you cut an individual off from the Church, remember that that individual has just as much need of salvation as before he entered the Church. "But are we not forbidden to baptize some individuals?" Yes. Well, do not baptize those you are forbidden to baptize. Those who are required to satisfy all the authorities who cut them off in consequence of the magnitude of their sins, you are not called upon to baptize; but these are not they who have been cut off for non-payment of Tithing or other like matters. They are the ones towards whom I desire you to manifest this spirit of forbearance. Many are cut off from the Church who are sorry for what they have done, and who cannot come in because somebody stands at the door to prevent their entrance. Feel after such; and when a man has been cut off for a wrong that is not irreparable, feel friendly towards him. If he was cut off last night, just call him brother to-day, and that very feeling will help to save him; but supposing you turn the cold shoulder to him, you

freeze him to death. The little spark of life there is in him is crushed out. It is an old saying that "Molasses will catch more flies than vinegar." Remember this when you associate with those who have done wrong, and always feel that your business is to save. The Apostles anciently inquired, "How often shall we forgive our brother? Seven times?" Why, yes: Jesus replied, "Seventy times seven, if he repents." Do not stop short of that number. And if an individual has done wrong, do not shut the door down upon him at once. Perhaps every time he comes in he may gain a little more knowledge and power to apply the truth, till eventually he may remain in the Church without having to be dealt with and requiring forgiveness so many as fifty or sixty times. When men go out into their fields of labour, there is no lack of a disposition to be exact; and through this disposition they sometimes become oppressors when they have no desire to oppress. People will occasionally have to be cut off; but when you do it we wish you to do it in the spirit of your callings—to do it as saviours. When you get people into the Church, strive to keep them in; be kind to them in their weaknesses; for a man can struggle all the better with his trials, if he has friends who will comfort, bless, cheer, and console him. When you see their weaknesses and wrongs, and feel that they should be dealt with, just think how we would appear, if compared with those who have been in heaven thousands of years, and have been all the time progressing in truth and righteousness. We are weak, compared with them. Well, there may be some who are weak, compared with us; and they are the very people we are called upon to try and save. Let us cultivate a spirit that when we have cut a poor soul off who has done wrong, we can pray for him, that he may turn and do right. It is not because of any individual act, or what may grow out of an individual case, that I speak as I do, but that this principle should be adopted by the Ministry. While we are in the Church we are apt to think that we are pure and holy, and that every brother or sister who does not come up to the mark which we have imagined to be the right one must be wrong. Well,

is this right? There is not, perhaps, anybody in the Church who feels and thinks exactly as I do. Must I therefore conclude they are all wrong? Among the people you are going to try and save are those who are honest and those who are dishonest—those who are pure and those who are impure. Cultivate, therefore, charity and wisdom to deal with all as their circumstances may demand, and ever remember your business is to do them good. Persons sometimes say that they have enjoyed the spirit of the work as much since they were cut off as while they were in the Church. Have they enjoyed the Spirit? Yes. Why? Simply because they were wrongfully cut off. They were cut off in such a way that it did not take the Spirit of God from them. And the reason why they were cut off was because they did not come up to the particular standard of perfection of those who dealt with them, or they did not come up to their feelings. I have heard of a man who was cut off because he would not believe that Adam was our Father and God. "Well, but was it not so?" Its being so does not change the fact that we are sinners and need salvation, and such preaching does not help men and women to repent of their sins. I call all that preaching senseless which cannot be applied. When we get where such things are needed, we shall be better able to understand them. We want men to be sober, temperate, just, honest, virtuous, and pure, always doing right, rising in progressive intelligence, and helping their fellows to rise also; and to accomplish this we must teach them to be so—teach them principles which they can comprehend and apply. When men know so much that they cannot preach from things on the earth, but have to go to heaven for them, I would as soon they would stop preaching and go home. Men have tried to preach how the resurrection was going to be brought about, and all those great things, a knowledge of which is so much sought after by some individuals. Such preaching will not redeem mankind, nor make them wiser and happier. As for believing that Adam was our God, I do not know but that we are gods; only, if it is so, we are very young yet. But could we ever

feel that we are the children of a God who watches over us with more care and solicitude than we can bestow upon the little ones who call us fathers here on the earth, would not our desires and object be to win the continued love of such a Parent by leaving off everything wrong, while we would seek to fill up the whole aggregate of our judgments with knowledge that is pure and holy, that we might become like that Father and be prepared to dwell with him. Then it is well to think that God is our Father; and whether it be Adam or anyone else, ever struggle upwards, upwards; always keep your hearts and faces upwards, and let every struggle you make be to carry you to the harbour of rest, the haven of peace, where you may enjoy the felicity awaiting the faithful children of our God. May the Lord bless you. Amen.

Elders KAY and McALLISTER sang—"O my Father, thou that dwellest." Benediction by President CANNON.

Friday, 3rd, 11 a.m.

Singing—"Once more we come before our God." Prayer by Elder J. M. KAY. Singing—"Redeemer of Israel."

President CANNON said—In standing before you this morning, brethren, I desire to be filled with that feeling of freedom which the Spirit of the Lord produces; and though I do not know particularly what subjects I may treat upon, my desire is to address you as I would like you to address me, were our positions reversed. I feel that the work of God is growing dearer to me every day of my life; and it is my increasing delight to do everything I can for the rolling of it forth. The remarks which have been made respecting self-improvement are such as I like to take to myself; and as they are more particularly applicable to the younger brethren, I feel the more to apply them personally, for I may truthfully consider myself as but a boy; my desire is to so improve in the knowledge of God and the things of the kingdom of God—in everything good and holy and exalting, that I may have power to labour for the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom upon the earth. I have an equally-anxious

desire to see my brethren who have received the holy Priesthood possessed of an earnest desire to ever keep the commandments of God, and advance in the understanding of everything necessary to qualify them for usefulness in his kingdom. While brother Amasa was speaking about our positions here, and the future that lay before us, the thought struck me that in the United States a man is not considered to have finished his education till he has travelled. After an individual has been elected to be a Senator or a member of Congress, his first aim is to take a trip to Europe, that by travelling through European nations he may the better qualify himself for his duties by extending his knowledge from personal observation, and acquaintance with governments and institutions, and their effects upon the people. And men of means send their sons to Europe to finish their education—not in schools or colleges, properly so called, but by travel, their object being to increase their breadth of views by becoming acquainted with men and things under different circumstances. A Congressman wishes to travel and mix among the society of other countries than the United States, to gain knowledge and experience which he could not gain at home, so that his opinions may carry weight with them. This travelling is considered an aid on the floors of Congress in qualifying the representatives of the people for their duties; and the opinions of men who have mixed with the people of other countries and have by personal observation acquired a knowledge of the workings of laws, institutions, and governments, carry weight with them, while those who have not travelled cannot command the same degree of respect and attention when they speak. We are in the position, to a great extent, of travellers. I look upon my brethren here, particularly the young men, myself included, as being in a position to acquire knowledge that may be of infinite benefit to us in years to come. We are undergoing an educational training, which, if we properly appreciate and profit by it, will be of incalculable service to us in the future opening up before us. And being sent forth as we are to carry the Gospel to the nations, if we should fail

to acquire the knowledge which our situations and positions give us the privilege of acquiring, our opportunities would be misspent, and we would not be the apt scholars we should be. We are too apt to think that there is no people so advanced or possessed of such an amount of useful knowledge as the people with whom we have been associated, when we have been confined to one locality. The township or county has, in the estimation of those who belong to it, and whose travels have never extended beyond it, no equal on earth; and they think there is no other place that can be compared with it. This feeling is generally entertained. The Englishman thinks there is no people like the English, and no country like England. The Welshman feels the same with regard to the Welsh and Wales. All his feelings, desires, hopes, and anticipations are centred in Wales. So with the man born on the Isle of Man—a little spot in the Irish Sea, hardly big enough to make a good corral. I have been there lately, and everything connected with the Isle of Man is, the natives think, superior to what can be found in any other place on the earth. Go where you will throughout the wide world, you will find among those who have never been beyond the smoke of their own fire-sides this same feeling, that no place can compare with, no customs, manners, or institutions equal those of the place where they have been born and reside. Travelling gives us broad and extended views of men and nations. It gives us to know that there are other people who have been progressing in knowledge of various kinds besides the people with whom we beforetime associated; and that though they may not eat the same kind of food, and though their habits and speech may be different, they possess knowledge that is valuable, and are susceptible of improvement; and if the light of the Gospel reaches them, it can bless them as it has blessed us, and can be enjoyed by them equally as it is enjoyed by those who have been instrumental in illuminating their minds with it.

Every Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should be devoid of every feeling of nationality, and should look upon the inhabitants

the earth as his brethren and sisters. We should not be tied down in our feelings to one small spot, but remember that God has given unto us this earth to labour in and do good, and that every spot of it, whether we travel north or south, east or west, is just as good as any other spot, Zion excepted. One place may possess more beautiful scenery—have a richer soil, or a more genial climate; but the same God looks down upon it all, and blesses and extends his mercies over the inhabitants of every land. If we get this idea firmly fixed upon our minds, we will ever strive to extend our knowledge, and acquire information from our observations of people and customs, everywhere we travel. If an Elder who has this idea implanted in him should be sent to England, he will not be so chained down in his mind that he cannot feel to improve himself by adopting whatever he sees is good and beneficial among the English with which he had not a chance of becoming acquainted before; but he will go forth with his eyes wide open to observe everything that is good and worth obtaining a knowledge of. If he sees a good thing among the English or Scotch—if he notices a habit, a mode of speech, or anything else that will be calculated to improve him and make him a superior being, no matter where he sees it, whether in Wales, the Channel Islands, the Highlands of Scotland, in Ireland, or any other place, he will adopt it. I want myself, in travelling, ever to act in this manner. I do not want to go through the world with the thoughts and ideas which I imbibed in childhood, confined to the same narrow bounds which then circumscribed them, nor be fixed through life in the habits and deportment acquired in youth; but desire to improve where I can, and learn from what I see around me. I found much that was good among the Sandwich Islanders, which I tried to adopt. I did not like their filthy habits, nor that which was impure in their habits and conversation; still I found many things I could adopt to advantage, and those I endeavoured to improve in. Perhaps I may not have been an apt scholar; still I have felt myself a citizen of the world to some extent, and have endeavoured to improve myself, to occupy

a true position in that citizenship. Since coming to England, I have seen many things that I like, and many I do not like. Many habits which they have in this country I see are good, and intend to adopt them: those which are not good I will try to avoid contracting. If we will all take this view of the matter, and try to act, wherever we go, in this manner, though we have not a book with us to read everywhere we are, we shall have the book of human nature open before us to study and learn from, and we shall be able to acquire a store of knowledge from it which other books would fail to supply us with. If we have seen a good thing in an Englishman, a Frenchman, a Welshman, a Scotchman, or a native of any other country, and have tried to adopt it, so far as we could, we have profited by so doing. The feeling we all ought to have is to acquire such a knowledge of the world that we can associate with men of the world, and meet them on their own level in those things in which they pride themselves that are good,—be at least their equals, if not their superiors. I have found it advantageous to be able to write correctly to men with whom I have had to correspond, to be able to speak grammatically, and to understand etiquette. All these things I have found advantageous at various times; and I have realized that it is important to have a knowledge of such things, and good to conform to the manners of those with whom we associate, so far as it is wise to do so; not to be confined to their practice, so as to be bound by them, but to understand them, that when we get into society where there is an importance attached to them, we can mingle in that society upon an equality with it in these matters. During my last mission to the United States, I found it advantageous, in mixing with people of standing and position there, to profit by what I saw and heard, and pay attention to these matters. If a man were to go among the world thinking, as too many of the Elders are apt to think, "Why, I am a servant of God—an authorized messenger of salvation to men; and if my words are not just right, it makes no difference to me: if you do not like them, you can lump them," and pursue a course corresponding with such

thoughts, would it not have a tendency to drive intelligent people from him, truth-loving though they might be? They do not believe that we are servants of God, and they judge us by our appearance, manners, and actions, which they think ought to be in consonance with the estimate they have formed of the positions we lay claim to occupy. I expect to see the day when the young men now rising up will figure in a broader field than their fathers were required to appear in, and have a different relationship with the nations of the earth. God has foretold by the mouth of his Prophets, and declared that this kingdom would continue and increase in the midst of the earth. The Elders of Israel are now ambassadors to the nations from the court of heaven bearing the Gospel of salvation to the children of men; but the time will come when they will be called to act in a different ambassadorial capacity. The nations are not going to be all destroyed at once, as many have imagined; but they are going to stand and continue to some extent with their governments; and the kingdom of God is not all the time to continue its present theological character alone, but it is to become a political power, known and recognized by the powers of the earth; and you, my brethren, may have to be sent forth to represent that power as its accredited agents. I would just as soon believe it as not. Young men now here to-day may be chosen to go forth and represent God's kingdom. You may be called to appear and represent it at the courts of foreign nations; and it is necessary that you should understand how to deport yourselves in every circle you might be called to move in—not stooping to their paltry ways, nor being bound by their manners; neither frozen into marble by the icy rigidity of their etiquette, nor condescending to do aught that was wrong; but yet understanding all the rules, practices, and customs which are observed in such places, and able to move in dignity, without violating them in the least. Do you think the Holy Spirit is going to do it all for you? If you do, you have a different opinion of the office of that Spirit to what I have. I have great confidence in the Spirit and in its aid, and I have great confidence in my own exertions assisted by

its presence. In all our attempts at improvement it assists and it gives us wisdom in all our associations and duties, and is an invaluable aid to us in our researches after truth. I wish to see my young brethren particularly take a course to remedy all their defects; I wish to hear them speak as grammatically and see them deport themselves as well as the best men upon the earth. What is the conclusion that intelligent people of the world come to, when they see a man act boorishly and ignorantly? Why, that he is a poor ignorant dolt, who does not know anything; and though he may know principles of truth, they have no weight with the bulk of mankind, because of the opinions they entertain concerning him, from his manner and lack of acquirements, which they deem of so much importance. Your intercourse has been sufficient with the nations for you to know this; I do not speak this way because I am perfect myself, for I feel to profit by the remarks which have been made, and I desire to be as far advanced in everything that will give me influence to do good as I can. Neither do I desire, in this, to find fault with any of my brethren, for I realize the disadvantages we have laboured under; but I do desire, now that we are in a position to improve and acquire information, to see us alive to the importance of its acquisition.

During the life-time of the Prophet Joseph, his study was to fit himself for the exalted position he would have occupied if he had lived, and will yet occupy in another condition of existence. It is the same with President Young. His sermons display this in their plainness and conciseness. We are sent forth to preach the Gospel to the world. What medium do we use to convey the truths of which we are the bearers? Why, language—words by which sentiments are interchanged and thoughts communicated from man to man. Shall we not, then, try to perfect ourselves in our language, seeing that by that means we can the more successfully accomplish the work we have to do? Shall we not endeavour to make ourselves as perfect and agreeable as we can, without being bound by the frivolous things of the Gentiles around us, or descending to their level in the

which is wrong and improper? There is nothing in the work we are engaged in which forbids us being so, and ignorance is not so very desirable.

I have heard individuals argue that men should be ignorant because many had apostatized who possessed learning; and the conclusion was drawn that they had apostatized because they were learned men. I do not think it a recommendation at all to be ignorant, neither is it anything to be proud of. True, men have laid aside the Spirit of God and have depended upon their own abilities; but ignorant men have done this as well as those who were learned. I have known ignorant men who, through the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, have been enabled to make themselves conspicuous and accomplish good, yet who, after a time, got so conceited that they thought they could preach without that Spirit, and accomplish by their own abilities that which the Lord had been enabling them to do, and who have gone backwards in consequence of so feeling; and if they had been educated men, it would have been the same. I do not, of course, wish you to think these things all-important. God has chosen the weak things of the earth to accomplish his purposes. [President Rich: "He could not get any other!"] Brother Charles says he could not get any other, and it is true; yet these weak things have to be qualified and prepared for the work before them; and that they may be so, much depends upon themselves. It may seem that I lay too much stress upon these things; but it is necessary to lay stress upon them, for our positions and the growth of the kingdom of God demand it. The first books I got when I went out to preach were a Bible and a dictionary, and I consulted the one pretty nearly as often as the other. When I met with a word of which I was ignorant, I searched to find its meaning, its derivation, and orthography. By so doing, I formed a correct habit with reference to this matter, which I have found of much utility; and now, when I come across a word or phrase that is new to me, it comes quite natural to search after it till I fully comprehend it. I often think, when I receive letters from the Elders labouring in the ministry, that they do not see the importance of

this. Many of you have great capabilities, but you permit your capabilities and powers to be obscured. How easy it would be for you, after you have written a letter, to commence and copy it out, with the aid of a dictionary, and at least have every word spelled correctly. It would be better for you to write one-half, and do it well; and by-and-by you would be able to write more than you can do now, and write it correctly; for you would not have to pause and think either how to express yourselves or how a word should be spelled. I speak thus plainly because I desire to see you progressing in knowledge, that you may be the better qualified for every duty which you may be called upon to perform. I have always wished myself that when my brethren have noticed anything that was wrong in me, either in speaking or writing, to have them point it out and correct me. By taking a course of this kind you will contract a habit of watching how you express yourselves, and of noticing the language of others. By studying the orthography of words, and their correct application, you the better get the sense of anything you may read, and the habit will grow upon you till you will never take up a book without your minds being directed to the style, manner, and language of the writer, to draw what information you can from it in this respect, as well as from the principles that may be treated on in it. It is pleasing to my ear to hear a man use correct and elegant language when expressing himself. It sounds like sweet music, and has an influence upon all who listen to it. We are sent forth to the nations to teach them the truth; hence we should ever study to present it before them so that there will be no danger of its being misunderstood. And the cultivation of this habit from youth to old age will make us powerful to the convincing of the honest-in-heart, under the direction of the Spirit of God. In speaking we may become like the Nephites, and in writing we may become like the brother of Jared, of whom it was said that "the things he wrote were mighty even as thou [the Lord] art, unto the overpowering of man to read them;" and we will find results growing out of this course that are little imagined at the present time.

In going from here to the post-office we cannot go the distance at one leap, though the time may come when we will be able to move like Jesus when he visited the Nephites of old, (leaving them to visit the Father, and also to show himself to the lost tribes of Israel, and returning to them,—all in the space of twenty-four hours); but in going to the post-office we would go by taking short steps. So it is with regard to the things of which I have been speaking. By acquiring knowledge a little at a time, we progress towards the goal to which our steps are directed. These points are unimportant in the estimation of some Elders. Some may think—"Oh, we will get through our mission soon, and then we will not require these things." We will not get through it so soon as we expect; for our mission continues as long as we are faithful and a world lies before us to be redeemed and regenerated, and these habits will be useful to us in all time to come. I am confident there is not one of the boys

here present but regrets the opportunities which he may have neglected to avail himself of; and if they continue to neglect opportunities, they will never reach a period in their lives when they will not have cause to regret by so doing. Let us not in the future have to look back upon our past lives, and view them with feelings of grief that we have failed to avail ourselves of the opportunities we have had, and be filled with regret when we think, "How many hours I have frittered away uselessly which, now that I am getting old and enfeebled, are gone from me forever, and the vigour and ability of my youth to improve opportunities are gone with them!" There is scarcely a day but we have minutes and hours to spare; and these used wisely in the acquirement of knowledge would soon place in our possession a store of useful information. If you would only devote a short time each day to the study of a single subject, in a twelvemonth you would be astonished at the amount of knowledge you would have acquired.

To be continued.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1862.

BLESSING OF CHILDREN.

THERE is, probably, no ordinance of the Gospel which the Elders are called upon more frequently to administer than that of the blessing of children. It is therefore necessary that it should be properly understood. When parents become acquainted with and obedient to the principles of the Gospel, they have a desire that their children should have the hands of the Elders laid upon them. The example of Jesus in laying his hands on children and blessing them, and the knowledge that the Priesthood has been restored again to man on the earth, and that a commandment has been given that their children shall have the hands of those bearing this Priesthood laid upon them to bless them, have the effect of awakening this desire within them. The first wish of the mother, after the birth of her child, if she is acquainted with the Gospel, is that it may be blessed by those having such authority. All that love with which maternity is so richly endowed is awakened within her for the tender offspring which Heaven has kindly given her; and as her heart yearns over it, her wish is that it may be blessed of the Lord with that health and strength necessary for its existence, and with that Spirit which will make its existence both useful and honoured. Through the administration of the legitimate and recognized authority of the Lord, she hopes that these blessings will be sealed upon the head of her child. Her faith teaches her to repose with confidence in the promises received through that medium: for

has she not realized within herself, in the reception of the Spirit of the Lord through its agency, that it has power?

In the hearts of believing, faithful parents there is treasured up and cherished with loving care and tenacious remembrance every promise bestowed by the Elders upon the heads of their children. No jewels could be more highly valued; and when they are occasionally brought forth from the recesses of the heart where they are preserved, they are viewed as the reliable assurances of that wealth of blessings which the future will yield them in their children, to repay them for all the care they have had over them while young. This being the case, every Elder who lays his hands upon a child to bless it should be careful that he is not led by fancy, or by a desire to say some wonderful things, instead of being prompted by the Spirit of the Lord. For when the Spirit of the Lord does not dictate, however many blessings an Elder may promise and fine things he may say, disappointment is sure to follow. The parents of the child have their expectations raised only to be dashed again to the earth. It is too often the case that in blessing children the Elders entertain the idea, that they ought to pronounce upon its head every good thing they can think of. Imagination is racked to frame blessings and promises to seal upon it; and if there are two or three or more children to be blessed, and several Elders present engaged in the ordinance, each one seeks to vie with his fellow in giving utterance to the greatest and most cheering promises. The children are frequently promised health and life and length of days; the boys are told that they shall receive the Priesthood, in which they are to become mighty; and the girls that they shall be mothers in Israel and stand at the head of a numerous posterity; and this is all done generally in the presence of a mixed congregation of believers and unbelievers. Of course, if anything happens to the child, and it does not live, the confidence of the Saints in the promises of the Priesthood is weakened, while unbelievers seize at it as an evidence to strengthen themselves in their unbelief. By this means much injury is done. The Adversary does not fail to take advantage of these things to weaken the confidence and destroy the faith of the Saints, and to poison the minds of the inquirer after truth.

When practicable, the blessing of children should be attended to in meetings called for that purpose. The Spirit of the Lord should be sought for in humility and diligent prayer, that the Elders and the people might be filled with it, and that every word or promise pronounced upon the child or children might be dictated by it. Then whatever might be said would be said aright and would be fulfilled. Where fathers hold the Priesthood themselves, it is their right to bless their own children; but, that records of the births and names of children may be preserved, it is customary for children to be brought unto the Elders of the Church for them to lay their hands upon them. And our counsel to the Priesthood at all such times would be, in the words of an ancient Apostle—"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do as of the ability which God giveth him, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." We would not have the Elders check the spirit of prophecy; but we would wish them to know that they have it, and that whatever promises they may make are uttered by its promptings. A child may be blessed, and the power of God may be invoked in its behalf in a prayer offered up in the name of Jesus and in the spirit of faith, which shall be recorded on high, and yet heaven and earth not be ransacked for blessings to be pronounced upon its head. Be the blessings ever so great and important that are placed upon the heads of

children, it should ever be remembered that they are all conditional. Their fulfilment depends to a very great extent upon those who have the children in charge. If they train them up in the fear of the Lord, there is a far greater likelihood of their receiving and enjoying such blessings than if they had trained them up in a total disregard of his commandments and the truth.

What we have said respecting the blessing of children applies with equal force to the ordinance of confirmation and the laying on of hands for the healing of the sick. The Priesthood is now held by large numbers, and these ordinances are more commonly attended to than they were in the early days of the Church; and, as a consequence of this, there is not that regard paid to the solemnity of these ordinances which characterized their administration then. As the Priesthood and ministers of the Lord, we should be careful upon these points. We should seek to preserve the ordinances which God in his mercy has restored in their ancient power to the earth, pure and free from any innovation and change. By so doing, the blessings which are to be obtained through that medium will be bestowed, accompanied by the power in which they are desired and sought. The greatest blessing that can be pronounced upon the heads of those who are being confirmed as members of the Church is to seal upon them, in the name of Jesus and by the power of the holy Priesthood, the Spirit of the Lord. All that is said in addition to this at such times has too frequently the effect of feeding the vanity of the persons thus blessed. What necessity is there for more than this? Can an Elder seal upon the head of any individual any blessing or gift which the Holy Spirit cannot bestow? If not, which all must admit, when the Holy Spirit is sealed upon a person's head, they have received that which comprehends within itself every other blessing which is in the power of the Priesthood at that time to bestow.

We hope these hints will have the effect of making the Elders more careful in all their administrations. It is a great responsibility which is entrusted to them; and when they speak in the name of the Lord, they should be careful that it is not their own feelings, prejudices, or wishes that are speaking, and which they fancy is the mind of the Lord. They should seek to discern between the promptings of their own spirit and the promptings and voice of the Spirit of the Lord.)

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(Continued from page 78.)

The *Maid of Iowa* arrived at half-past two p. m., while I was examining the painting of "Death on the Pale Horse," by Benjamin West, which has been exhibiting in my reading-room for the last three days. The *Maid* had lost her lighter, which was loaded at the time with corn and lumber, it having broken in two on a snag in the Iowa river.

This morning Samuel James started for Springfield to carry letters and papers to Governor Ford concerning the destruction of the *Expositor* press.

About 7 p. m., I rode out with O. P. Rockwell.

I received the following letter:—

"Fort Madison, June 15th, 1844.

"Gen. Joseph Smith:

"Dear Sir,—I have been informed that a writ was issued against the steam ferry *New Purchase* for wharfage on Tuesday last, but no such writ has been served or shown to me, and I am anxious to learn the facts of the case. If it is required, I will pay wharfage with the greatest of pleasure; but I would dislike to have cost to pay in addition. I expect to visit this place with my boat at least once a week during the season. You will confer a favour on me by informing me in relation to the ordinances regulating wharfage, &c.

It has been rumoured that the *New*

Purchase was employed to convey to Nauvoo an armed force to attack the citizens in connexion with other companies, on account of the late difficulties at your place; but it is not true. I assure you that the boat will not be employed in any unlawful enterprise, and I further assure you that there is no unkind feeling existing in our place against the people of your place. I remain yours, with respect,

A. LADD.

Captain of the *New Purchase*."

"Gen. Joseph Smith, Nauvoo, Ill."

A Conference was held at Franklin, Michigan. Present of the Twelve—W. Woodruff and George A. Smith; Elder George A. Smith presided. Nine Branches were represented, comprising 170 members, 8 Elders, 5 Priests, 5 Teachers, and 3 Deacons. There were ordained 1 High Priest, 9 Elders, 2 Priests, and 1 Deacon, under the hands of Elders W. Woodruff, George A. Smith, and C. C. Rich.

Sunday, 16.—I preached at the stand at 10 a.m. Before I closed my remarks it rained severely. The following synopsis was reported by Elder Thomas Bullock, whom I had transferred from the duties of clerk of the *Maid of Iowa* to my office:—

"MEETING IN THE GROVE, EAST OF THE TEMPLE, JUNE 16, 1844.

Prayer by Bishop N. K. Whitney.

Choir sang—"Mortals, awake."

President Joseph Smith read the 3rd chap. of Revelations, and took for his text 1st chap., 6th verse—"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

It is altogether correct in the translation. Now, you know that of late some malicious and corrupt men have sprung up and apostatized from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and they declare that the Prophet believes in a plurality of Gods; and, lo and behold! we have discovered a very great secret, they cry—"The Prophet says there are many Gods, and this proves that he has fallen."

It has been my intention for a long time to take up this subject and lay it clearly before the people, and show what my faith is in relation to this interesting matter. I have contemplated the saying of Jesus (Luke 17 chap., 26 verse)—"And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." And if it rains, I'll preach this doctrine, for the truth shall be preached.

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose. I wish to declare I have always, and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods. It has been preached by the Elders fifteen years.

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit; and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods. If this is in accordance with the New Testament, lo and behold! we have three Gods anyhow, and they are plural; and who can contradict it?

Our text says—"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." The Apostles have discovered that there were Gods above, for Paul says God was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. My object was to preach the Scriptures, and preach the doctrine they contain, there being a God above the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am bold to declare I have taught all the strong doctrines publicly, and always teach stronger doctrines in public than in private.

John was one of the men, and the Apostles declare they were made kings and priests unto God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It reads just so in the Revelations. Hence, the doctrine of a plurality of Gods is as prominent in the Bible as any other doctrine. It is all over the face of the Bible. It stands beyond the power of controversy. 'A way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein.'

Paul says there are Gods many, and Lords many. I want to set it forth in a plain and simple manner; but to us there is but one God—that is, *pertaining to us*; and he is in all and through all. But if Joseph Smith says there are Gods many, and Lords many, they cry—"Away with him! Crucify him, crucify him!"

Mankind verily say that the Scriptures are with them. Search the Scriptures, for they testify of things that these apostates would gravely pronounce blasphemy. Paul, if Joseph Smith is a blasphemer, you are. I say there are Gods many, and Lords many, but to us only one; and we are to be in subjection to that one, and no man can limit the bounds or the eternal existence of eternal time. Hath he beheld the eternal world, and is he authorized to say that there is only one God? He makes himself a fool if he thinks or says so, and there is an end of his career or progress in knowledge. He cannot obtain all knowledge, for he has sealed up the gate to it.

Some say I do not interpret the Scriptures the same as they do. They say it means the heathen's gods. Paul says there are Gods many, and Lords many; and that makes a plurality of Gods, in spite of the whims of all men. Without a revelation, I am not going to give them the knowledge of the God of heaven. You know and I testify that Paul had no allusion to the heathen gods. I have it from God, and get over it if you can. I have a witness of the Holy Ghost, and a testimony that Paul had no allusion to the heathen gods in the text. I will show from the Hebrew Bible that I am correct, and the first word shows a plurality of Gods; and I want the apostates and learned men to come here and prove to the contrary, if they can. An unlearned boy must give you a little Hebrew. *Berosheit baurau Eloheim ait aushama-yeen vehau aurait*, rendered by King James' translators, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." I want to analyze the word *Berosheit*. *Rosh*, the head; *Sheit*, a grammatical termination. The *Baith* was not originally put there when the inspired man wrote it, but it has been since added by an old Jew. *Baurau* signifies to bring forth; *Eloheim* is from the word *Eloi*, God, in the singular number; and by adding the word *heim*, it renders it Gods. It read first--'In the beginning the head of the Gods brought forth the Gods,' or, as others have translated it--'The head of the Gods called the Gods together.' I want to show a little learning as well as other fools.

'Drink deep, or taste not the Pterian spring;
Shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
But drinking deep will sober us again.'

All this confusion among professed translators is for want of drinking another draught.

The head God organized the heavens and the earth. I defy all the learning in the world to refute me. 'In the beginning the heads of the Gods organized the heavens and the earth.' Now the learned priest and the people rage, and the heathen imagine a vain thing. If we pursue the Hebrew text further, it reads--'*Berosheit baurau Eloheim ait aushama-yeen vehau aurait*.'--'The head one of the Gods said, Let us make man in our own image.' I once asked a learned Jew--'If the Hebrew language compels us to render all words ending in *heim* in the plural, why not render the first *Eloheim* plural?' He replied--'That is the rule, with few exceptions; but in this case it would ruin the Bible.' He acknowledged I was right. I came here to investigate these things precisely as I

believe them. Hear and judge for yourselves; and if you go away satisfied, well and good.

In the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation. It is a great subject I am dwelling on. The word *Eloheim* ought to be in the plural all the way through--Gods. The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us; and when you take a view of the subject, it sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness, and perfection of the Gods. All I want is to get the simple naked truth, and the whole truth.

Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are only one God! I say that is a strange God anyhow--three in one and one in three! It is a curious organization. 'Father, I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou hast given me.' 'Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.' All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism. It would make the biggest God in all the world. He would be a wonderful big God--he would be a giant or a monster. I want to read the text to you myself--'I am agreed with the Father and the Father is agreed with me, and we are agreed as one.' The Greek shows that it should be *agreed*. 'Father, I pray for them which thou hast given me out of the world, and not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be *agreed*, as thou, Father, art agreed with me, and I with thee, that they also may be agreed with us,' and all come to dwell in unity, and in all the glory and everlasting burnings of the Gods; and then we shall see as we are seen, and be as our God, and he as his Father. I want to reason a little on this subject. I learned it by translating the papyrus which is now in my house. I learned a testimony concerning Abraham, and he reasoned concerning the God of heaven. 'In order to do that,' said he, suppose we have two facts: that supposes another fact may exist--two men on the earth, one wiser than the other, would logically show that another who is wiser than the wisest may exist. Intelligencies exist one above another, so that there is no end to them.'

If Abraham reasoned thus--If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God, the Father of Jesus Christ, had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also. Where was there ever a son without a father? And where was there ever a father without

first being a son? Whenever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor? And everything comes in this way. Paul says that which is earthly is in the likeness of that which is heavenly. Hence, if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that he had a Father also? I despise the idea of being scared to death at such doctrine, for the Bible is full of it.

I want you all to pay particular attention to what I am saying. Jesus said that the Father wrought precisely in the same way as his Father had done before him. As the Father had done before, he laid

down his life, and took it up the same as his Father had done before. He did as he was sent, to lay down his life and take it up again; and then was committed unto him the keys, &c. I know it is good reasoning.

I have reason to think that the church is being purged. I saw Satan fall from heaven, and the way they ran was a caution. All these are wonders, and marvellous in our eyes in these last days. So long as men are under the law of God, they have no fear—they do not scare themselves.

(To be continued.)

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SUMMARY OF NEWS.

AUSTRIA.—The valley of the Danube near Vienna is inundated, and the communication between the Northern and Western Railways has been interrupted in consequence. Prague is also partially inundated.

TURKEY.—The peasants in several villages have been excited by revolutionary agitation, prepared to march on Bueharest. The sub-prefect, who wished to stop them, was killed by them, and the procurator illtreated. Prince Couza has despatched troops to meet them and arrest their advance by force.

CHINA.—French despatches from Cockin China, under date 15th December last, are full of the successful exploits of General Bonnard, who signalized his arrival there by the taking of Pont Paulo-Condor. The French General was no sooner in possession of that important centre of operations and strong strategical position than he organized all his forces and announced his intention of adding other trophies to the military glories of France. Words were in this instance quickly followed up by deeds, and Bien-Hoa in the course of a few hours saw the French eagles floating upon her walls. Peking and Canton are quiet. Ningpo has fallen into the hands of the rebels.

* **AMERICA.**—Sacramento City has been under water from two to eleven feet deep, driving the people to the second storeys of their houses, and preventing them from building fires or cooking food. The whole valley and portions of the State have suffered most severely from this unprecedented inundation. Many millions of dollars' worth of property have been destroyed. No less than 45 Chinamen were carried away in their cabins at Oregon Bar, in Placer County. The Chinese hongts in San Francisco have since received letters from the interior of the State to the effect that during the late freshet nearly 1,000 Chinamen were washed off from Long Bar and vicinity, on the Yula, and drowned. Information has been received by parties direct from Manassas that the rebel forces have evacuated that point, falling back to a position further south, not known; but the object is supposed to be to counteract an apprehended movement of our troops from the seaboard. The *St. Louis Democrat* of January 17th publishes the following:—“Information of a reliable character reached this city last night to the effect that yesterday a large body of rebels, numbering about 6000 men, in command of Jeff Thompson, advanced upon a Federal detachment of 800 troops under Col. Mills, at a distance of about 23 miles from Ironton, and gave them battle. A desperate conflict ensued, resulting in the loss of many killed and wounded on both sides. The Federals, overpowered by numbers, had, at latest accounts, fallen back a distance of eight miles, leaving a quantity of baggage in the hands of the enemy, and were still retreating towards Pilot Knob.

FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

MIDDLE AGES.—Latter ancient history is considered as ending with the destruction of the Roman Empire, A.D. 476; and modern history dates from the age of Charlemagne, A.D. 800. The middle ages therefore lie between these two dates.

THE "TEMPLE."—The range of buildings situated near Temple Bar, London, are thus called, because they were anciently the abode of the Knights Templars. On the decline of that order, they were purchased by the professors of the common law, and converted into inns.

ADRIAN'S WALL.—The wall of Adrian and Severus, which was built in the year 121, to prevent the irruptions of the Scots and the Picts, extended from the mouth of the river Tyne to Solway Frith. It was 80 miles in length, 12 feet high, and 8 feet thick, with watch-towers.

LORD MAYOR.—The Lord Mayor of London is chosen annually. On the 29th of September, the livery in Guildhall of common assembly choose two aldermen by a show of hands, who are presented to a court called the Court of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, by whom one of the aldermen so chosen, generally the first in seniority, is declared Lord Mayor elect; and on the 9th of November following he enters upon his office.

MEANING OF NAMES.—Timothy means a fearer of God. It comes from the Greek "Timo" and "Theos." Susan means a lily, and is derived from the Hebrew: it is a shortened form of Susannah. Emma is from the German "Amme," meaning a nurse. Thomas, in the Hebrew and Greek, means double, or having two hearts. Francis is a name that comes from the Teutonic; Frances is the feminine. The name Agnes is from the Greek, and means a chaste woman. Charlotte is the feminine of Charles. William comes to us from the Belgic, and signifies the shield or defence of many. Elisha is an Hebrew word, and means the wrath of God. Mary, also Hebrew, signifies a tear-drop. Jesse, from the Hebrew, means a graft.

VARIETIES.

NEVER purchase love or friendship by gifts. When thus obtained, they are lost as soon as you stop payment.

A **PHRENOLOGIST** has been examining Queen Victoria's head, and says that he finds the bump of adhesiveness quite sadly deficient, if it existed there at all. In justice, however, to this gentleman, we must state that the Queen's head under examination was a postage-stamp.

LINSEED BEER.—One pound of linseed, half-a-pound of sugar, one pound of treacle, halfpennyworth of Spanish juice, halfpennyworth of liquorice, ginger according to palate, and twopennyworth of barm. Boil the linseed in four gallons of water, then strain off the linseed, and when it is about new milk warm, put on the barm, and after it has worked for a day and a half it is ready for drinking.

TO MAKE HORN SOFT.—Take one pound of wood ashes, two pounds of quicklime, and one quart of water; let it boil together till reduced to one-third, then dip a feather into it, and if in drawing it out, the plume comes off, it is boiled enough; if not, let it boil longer. When it is settled, filter it through a cloth, then put in shavings or filings of horn; let them soak therein three days; and anointing your hands first with oil, work the horn shavings into a mass, and print, mould, or form it into what shape you please.

REGIMENTAL RIVALRY.—It is related that a rivalry existed between two regiments encamped on the Potomac, which is sometimes carried to the most absurd extremes. As an instance of this, it is stated that on one occasion the Colonel of one of the regiments was waited on by a zealous Chaplain, who wished to promote the religious interests of the regiment. The Chaplain was politely received and beckoned to a seat on a chest. "Colonel," said he, elevating his eye-brows, "you have one of the finest regiments in the army." "I think so," replied the Colonel. "Do you think you pay sufficient attention to the religious instruction of your men?" "Well, I don't know," replied the Colonel. "A lively interest has been awakened in the ——— regiment; the Lord has blessed the labours of his servants, and ten men have been baptized." (This was the rival regiment.) "Is that so, 'pon honour?" asked the Colonel. "Yes, sir." "Sergeant," said the Colonel to an attending Orderly, have fifteen men detailed immediately to be baptized. I'll be d—d if they shall get ahead of us anyway." The Chaplain made a note of the interview and retired.